



**USAID**  
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**JAMAICA**

# USAID/JAMAICA— WEEKLY REPORT

## September 24, 2012 Highlights:

- ♦ **Tax Administration Jamaica Modernizing with help from USAID Jamaica** - Through technical assistance being provided by USAID/Jamaica's project to Promote, Renew, Invigorate, Develop and Energize the Economic Environment (PRIDE) the government has paved the way for Tax Administration Jamaica (TAJ) to write off millions of dollars in tax arrears deemed uncollectable. This action, taken by Cabinet, will allow TAJ auditors and staff to focus their efforts on ensuring better compliance by current tax payers, as well as streamlining case management and improving on debt arrears collection within the Large Taxpayer Office. The information was disclosed on September 19, 2012 at a weekly media briefing by Minister of Finance, Dr. Peter Phillips. In the same session, the Minister warned that the measures will be put in place to ensure that tax dodgers do not cheat the system. Minister Phillips indicated this new initiative is an effort by government to modernize tax administration by allowing for regulations for the management of an arrears of tax debt and in particular determine whether a tax debt is collectable.



Acting Mission Director, Ms. Jeannette Vail (left) along with representatives from the JN Fund Managers (JNFM), Junior Achievement (JA) and students from the Ardenne High School are seen here at the JNFM/JA Launch.



Acting Mission Director, Ms. Jeannette Vail (center) is surrounded by (from left), the Minister of Education, the Honorable Ronald Thwaites, Executive Director of NIA, Professor Trevor Munroe and the Deputy British High Commissioner Mr. Graham Glover at the recently held launch of the NIA Essay Competition for International Peace Day.

- ♦ **Jamaica National Fund Managers partners with Junior Achievement—** On September 18, 2012 the JN Fund Managers (JNFM) and Junior Achievement signed a MOU which will see JNFM providing approx. US\$20,000 (J\$1.7M) to the Junior Achievement Company of Entrepreneur (JACE) program for the 2012-2013 school year. Under this partnership JNFM commits to supporting 10 high schools across seven parishes. This means that once a month JN staff members will provide mentorship to the students in the 10 schools. In addition, JNFM will assist the top 100 students in this year's program to get their first national ID (including passport if necessary). The signing took place at Ardenne High School, one of the 10 schools identified for mentorship and winner of the student "Company of the Year" for the last two years. In 2011-2012 750 students participate in the JACE program. This year JA is targeting 1,000 students in 50 schools. One of the main goals of JA this year is to have private sector companies mentor each of the schools in the program. So far 82% of schools (or 42 of the 50 schools) already have private sector support.
- ♦ **Essay Competition for International Peace Day—** The National Integrity Action Ltd. (NIA), USAID/Jamaica's project to promote transparency and reduce corruption in the public and private sectors, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education funded engaged over 200 high school students from across the island to recognize International Peace Day on September 21, 2012. The event was the to launch an essay competition for 12th and 13th graders that will have an anti-corruption theme. The launch included the screening of a film, followed by an interactive discussion with the students led by Executive Director of NIA, Professor Trevor Munroe.



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## September 24, 2012 Upcoming Events:

- ♦ **From Farm to Table** - On September 29, 2012, the USAID Development Grants Program funded INMED in association with Pantrepant Farms in Trelawny will host a farm to table event. The event will play host to a number of dignitaries from the public and private sector who will be served with fish and vegetables that have been grown from the project farms and schools. Proceeds from the event will benefit project farmers and schools in the Trelawny and Westmoreland area.

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